

The *Economic Impact* of Smoke-free Air Policies

Smoke-free Air Laws are *Good for Workers*:

- Although 76% of white collar workers are covered by smoke-free policies, just 52% of blue collar workers and only 43% of food service workers benefit from these protections (Journal of Occupational & Environmental Medicine, 2004).
- In response to a Las Vegas casino worker's complaint, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) tested 124 non-smoking casino workers in smoking casinos. Results indicated a dangerous level of secondhand smoke exposure, and NIOSH recommended that all casinos become smoke-free.
- In Colorado, the initial implementation of the smoke-free air law (which exempted casinos) was followed by a significant 23% drop in ambulance calls. Once the law requiring smoke-free casinos took effect, it was followed by a 19% drop in ambulance calls, specifically from casinos.
- After the Smoke-Free Restaurants and Bars Law was implemented in January 2010 in North Carolina, the average number of weekly emergency department visits by North Carolinians experiencing heart attacks decreased by 21%. This saved an estimated \$3.3 to \$4.8 million in annual healthcare costs (North Carolina Medical Journal, 2014).

Smoke-free Air Laws are *Good for Business*:

- The Surgeon General's 2014 Report concluded that employers are likely to save money by implementing policies for smoke-free workplaces. Savings include costs associated with such things as fire risk, damage to property and furnishings, cleaning, workers' compensation, disability, retirement, injuries, and life insurance.
- There is clear evidence that smoke-free legislation does not hurt restaurant or bar businesses, and in some cases business may improve. Similarly, smoke-free ordinances were not associated with either a decline or increase of profits from charitable gaming in Massachusetts. Any decrease in revenues began before the implementation of these laws (American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 2010).
- The largest economic impact study of smoke-free laws to date showed that smoke-free laws in 216 communities in 8 different states had no significant association with economic outcomes in restaurants and bars in 7 of the 8 states. Therefore, statewide smoke-free air laws are not expected to have an adverse economic impact on restaurants or bars in these states (CDC, Preventing Chronic Disease, 2013).
- Smoke-free laws help lessen the economic toll that secondhand smoke already takes on our state. According to a 2012 study from the Indiana University Bowen Research Center, secondhand smoke costs Indiana \$1.3 billion annually in excess medical expenses and premature loss of life.

The Health Impact of Smoke-free Air Policies

Each year in the United States, over 41,000 adult deaths are attributable to secondhand smoke exposure among nonsmokers. Of these deaths each year, over 7,000 are due to lung cancer and approximately 34,000 are due to coronary heart disease. An estimated 1,426 people in Indiana die prematurely each year due to secondhand smoke exposure.

The U.S. Surgeon General has concluded that:

- Smoke-free workplace policies are the only effective way to eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke in workplace.
- Separating smokers from nonsmokers, cleaning the air, and ventilating buildings cannot eliminate exposure.
- Blue collar and service employees are less likely than white collar indoor workers to be covered by smoke-free policies.
- Workplace smoking restrictions lead to less smoking among workers.

Anticipated Outcomes of Smoke-free Air Laws that have *Health Impact*:

- **Reduced heart, lung and respiratory disease due to exposure to secondhand smoke**
Compared to a control community with no smoke-free workplace law, Monroe County experienced a 59% net decrease in hospital admissions for heart attacks in nonsmokers, with no prior cardiac history, during the study period which tracked 22 months prior to and following the law. Monroe County and Bloomington both have comprehensive smoke-free workplace law. (Journal of Drug Education, 2007)
- **Increased quit attempts by smokers** Studies have found that requiring all workplaces to be smoke-free would reduce smoking prevalence by 10%. Workplace laws have their greatest impact on groups with the highest smoking rates. In addition, employees in smoke-free workplaces have higher rates of smoking cessation than employees where smoking is permitted. The average adult smoker costs employers \$3,400.00 a year in lost productivity and excess medical expenses. (CDC: Coverage for tobacco use cessation treatments: why, what, and how. 2003)
- **Reduced youth initiation to smoking**
Indiana data on youth smoking strongly suggest that smoke-free homes are associated with significantly lower rates of adolescent smoking. In 2012, 77% of middle school and 59% of high school current smokers reported someone smoking tobacco products in their home, while they were there; 25% of non-smoking middle school students and 24% of non-smoking high school students reported the same (2012 Indiana Youth Tobacco Survey).

Eighteen communities in Indiana (Delaware Co., Hancock Co., Monroe Co., Vanderburgh Co., Vigo Co., Bloomington, Columbus, Cumberland, Elkhart, Fort Wayne, Franklin, Greencastle, Indianapolis, Lawrence, Plainfield, Terre Haute, West Lafayette, and Zionsville) have passed comprehensive local smoke-free air ordinances which cover all workplaces, including bars, ensuring all workers are protected from secondhand smoke. These eighteen comprehensive ordinances cover approximately 28% of all residents in Indiana.

Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Commission~ www.in.gov/isdh/tpc ~ 317.234.1787
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